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The history of the Middle Ages is suggestive, but strongly biased by an evident and intelligible apologetic purpose. This is especially manifest in Chapter V,—the rough side of the Middle Ages. The advantages of the feudal system having been previously enumerated, an attempt is made in this chapter to prove that the disadvantages were apparent rather than real. While much of truth is stated, the unbiased reader can hardly rest satisfied with the conclusions offered. This glorification of feudalism preparatory to a condemnation of modern society smacks of pettifogging.

The great blemish of the book is the temper in which the writers approach recent history, and the existing social organization. That there is much of truth in this part of the work cannot be denied, but its force is weakened by the frequent epithets, the vein of vituperation, delicate though it be, which betrays at every page a hopeless alienation from the existing social system, a system which, after all, probably has as much in its favor as feudalism. Granting, as we freely do, that the present social equilibrium is unstable and transitional, it still remains true that it is a normal stage of evolution, and that it deserves sympathetic treatment rather than vilification.

A brief sketch of the evolution of socialist theory follows, in which bias is again apparent. The perennial mistake is made of stating with approval Marx's theory of value, a mistake we call it because it is as demonstrably untenable as any economic theory ever presented, and still more because it is no way necessary to socialism. It is one of the anomalies of the evolution of socialism that the socialist movement with its vast propelling instinct so easily explained and so easily justified on ethical grounds, should have laid such feverish hold on the murky dialectic of Marx, and made it the centre of a "science," if not of a religion. The book closes with a suggestion of a constitution of socialistic society, which is modestly stated and interesting. The book is one more evidence of the reality and power of the forces behind the socialistic agitation, and of the incoherency of their present expression.

H. H. POWERS.

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*Politische Geographie der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der natürlichen Bedingungen und wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse.* By Dr. FRIEDRICH RATZEL, Professor der Geographie an der Universität zu Leipzig. Zweite Auflage. Pp. 763. München : R. Oldenburg. 1893.

In Ratzel's "Political Geography of the United States" Germany has brought forth a book worthy to rank with Bryce's work as a

transatlantic view of American civilization. Whereas in the English work the political element is accentuated, in the German the emphasis is laid first on the geographical conditions, and from these as a basis a wide range of questions embracing race, population, politics and culture is ably discussed. Ratzel sees in the United States a new country and a youthful nation filled with the spirit of enterprise, working with the indomitable energy of a people in whom repair still exceeds waste, having conceptions which in their scope reflect the greatness of the territory in which they were born. Our civilization is to him highly instructive, because it means European ideals carried out under peculiarly fortunate circumstances, with no restriction of space or means, and with a minimum of interference and disturbance from outside influences because of the comparative isolation of the United States and its natural leadership among the nations of the Western Hemisphere.

Faithfully to portray this civilization in all its phases, to analyze the factors in it, to establish the laws of their combination and estimate their reciprocal influence,—this is the task which the author set for himself and which he has performed with astonishing completeness and truth. He is in turn geographer, ethnographer, sociologist and political economist, and in whatever character he writes, he is always the scientist. He brings to his work a German integrity of mind, the broad judgment of a man learned in many lines, a familiarity with our history even in its remote and local features, and a critical insight into our national character born of knowledge and sympathy.

The standpoint of the author is essentially that of the geographer. He finds in geographical position, boundaries and area the fundamental elements, the known quantities in the equation of a country's development, and he therefore devotes to these the detailed treatment which their importance would demand. He shows that particularly in the case of the United States the young republic struck its roots deep into the soil of the country, that every extension of its territory meant the planting of a new cornfield, that what it gained politically it held industrially, and that the continued intimate connection of these two factors accounts for the wholesome character of our national growth. Geography in his hands throws some strong side-lights upon questions of historical development, public policy, race intermixture, and social tendencies; so to the student of American history and economics his book offers many profoundly suggestive thoughts.

ELLEN C. SEMPLE.

*Louisville, Ky.*